

## INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR

REPORT

SUBJECT Soviet Military Organization and Doctrine DATE DISTR. 19 December 1958 25X1

NO. PAGES 1

REFERENCES RD

25X1

DATE OF INFO.

PLACE &amp; DATE ACQ.

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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE

report on various aspects of Soviet military organization and doctrine includes seven charts, depicting the organization of various military units with brief accompanying explanatory notes.

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(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)																	

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COUNTRY: USSR  
SUBJECT: The Soviet Army

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The following survey attempts to describe the principal elements of Soviet military organization and doctrine. It is recognized that the presentation in the form of a report imposes severe limitations on the treatment of this subject

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No attempt has been made to compile a comprehensive study; instead, emphasis has been placed on those features which are essential for understanding Soviet military organization and concepts. The greater part of the following information refers to the period immediately preceding the

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introduction of nuclear weapons, a step which resulted in certain changes in organizational structure, tactics, and operational approach.

### Soviet Military Doctrine

1. One of Communism's ideological doctrines is that each war waged by the Soviet Union is a struggle between social classes and, by virtue of this characteristic, uncompromising. This fact explains the reason of one of the main principles of the Soviet Military Doctrine, which requires that the main objective of every operation should be the annihilation of enemy manpower. The occupation of territory is relegated to a place of secondary importance, being easily achieved after the attainment of the main objective. For example, this principle is stressed in the Military Doctrine which states that the chief means of attaining superiority in the air is the annihilation of the maximum number of enemy pilots, that is, the manpower serving the aircraft. The <sup>purpose</sup> ~~destination~~ of enemy aircraft in the air and on the ground is a secondary objective. This is probably the reason for the emphasis put by the Soviet military leaders on the development of fighter aircraft.

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2. In conformity with the above rule, the offensive is the major type of warfare. Only by means of an offensive can the enemy order of battle be destroyed and his forces destroyed. The primary purpose of the defensive battle is, likewise, the destruction of a maximum number of the attacker, and secondary is the destruction of his armament and equipment, thereby gaining time and changing the ratio of strength. The defensive battle primarily creates suitable conditions for the defender, in order to enable him to pass to the offensive or to protect an offensive from another direction.
3. To be victorious in every battle and expressly the offensive battle, depends on the correct selection of the direction of the main effort.<sup>1</sup> However, an operational decision at all levels of command includes an indication of the main effort as well as of the vital spot in an enemy-defended sector or position, in other words: those areas containing the major concentrations of manpower and military supplies. Along the direction of the main effort, the ratio of strength in an attack must not be less than <sup>3:1</sup> ~~15~~ in favor of the attacker as far as infantry and armor are concerned, and an even <sup>10:1</sup> ~~100~~ greater ratio for the artillery (up to ~~1000~~).
4. Attack as well as defense require a high degree of continuous maneuverability and flexibility. The chief objective of

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annihilating the enemy manpower, is attained by the use of all kinds of maneuvers in order to contain the enemy order of battle and destroy his military potential. The Soviet Military Doctrine distinguishes between three types of maneuvers:

- a. The frontal attack.
- b. The outflanking maneuvers.
- c. The encirclement.

Outflanking means the attack on a flank of the enemy's disposition or in his rear, whereas part of the attacking forces simultaneously carries out a frontal attack, supporting the flanking force with their fire. The term "outflanking" is given to a flanking maneuver, tactically combined with a frontal maneuver. Encirclement is carried out by attack on a flank, or, primarily, on the rear of the enemy's dispositions, without fire-support by the force which carries out the frontal attack. No tactical cooperation exists therefore between the force maneuvering on the flank and that attacking the front. The combination of these three maneuvers should result in the subsequent cutting-off of the enemy formations and their destruction. This movement does not rank as a separate maneuver, but rather as a certain execution of an engagement or an operation, and is generally carried out by a simultaneous maneuver against the two flanks of an enemy disposition.

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5. Each of the various battle and operational objectives are to be attained by exact and continuous cooperation between the different arms and services, as well as between adjoining units and formations. Distinction is made between tactical and campaign (operational and strategic) cooperation. Operational cooperation is the cooperation maintained at the campaign level as applied to a specific operation executed at any stage of the campaign. Strategical cooperation means primarily inter-service cooperation within the framework of the entire war operation, as well as cooperation between operational formations, carrying out, simultaneously or consecutively, certain operations in different operational or strategic directions. Cooperation is always organized to support the ground forces as a whole on the strategical level and the infantry on the operational and tactical level.<sup>2</sup>
6. Each military operation, and particularly an offensive, must be carried out with strong support by artillery fire and aircraft, from the beginning of the battle and until its conclusion. This fire support must be concentrated and flexible in order to open a breach for the infantry and armor from the starting line until the attainment of the battle objectives. In the defensive battle, too, the mission of supporting fire, especially

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by artillery is to contain the attack of the enemy. In the layout of defended localities or positions the antitank fire-plan is the framework of the entire defensive fire-plan and the disposition of the antitank units serves as the outline of the entire defended locality or position. During World War II the Soviets created the concept of "artillery offensive". The essence of this term is the continuous transfer of artillery fire from one target to another and the support of the advance of infantry and armor from the starting line and until the completion of the mission. The "artillery offensive" is carried out in three stages:

- a. Artillery preparation.
  - b. Support of assault by infantry and armor.
  - c. Support for operations inside the enemy perimeter by laying down a barrage.
7. The offensive battle has the following stages:
- a. Destruction of the enemy's dispositions which lie in the path of the attacking force (the breakthrough).
  - b. The pursuit.
  - c. The cutting-off and annihilation of the enemy's forces in the rear of his dispositions.
  - d. The preparation of suitable conditions for new operations.

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The attack commences from the starting line which is the line of contact. The terms "assembly area" and "forming-up area" are applicable only to the armor and the artillery and then only during the preparatory stages. For the infantry the forming-up area is at the line of contact and the line of the forward defenses is actually the starting line. An assembly area for the infantry is solely designated for units preparatory to changes in the line.

8. For the offensive battle every unit (up to brigade level) is allotted from its higher echelon of command a primary task (the "near task"), a subsequent task (the "next task"), as well as the direction of attack after the execution of the latter. Formations (divisions and corps) are allotted, in addition to the first and second task, a "mission of the day", namely, which portion of the enemy's forces is to be annihilated by the end of the day, which line is to be reached by evening, actions to be carried out during the night and plans (along general lines) for the following day. Higher levels (armies and army-groups) are allotted only the lines to be occupied at the end of each day of operations.
9. Thus the duties allotted to a brigade-group during an offensive battle may be the following:
  - a. First duty: destruction of enemy forces in their battalion-defended localities.



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- b. Second duty: occupation of those areas held by the brigade, reserves of the enemy and the deployment areas of his artillery as well as preparations to attack in any required direction.

According to Soviet regulations, the completion of the first duty is allotted to the forces in the advance order of battle without employing forces of the second echelon or the general reserve. The second echelon (or the general reserve) will be committed to the battle after the first duty has been accomplished, this being the main force allotted for the carrying out of the second duty. (The term "reorganization" is unknown to the Soviets, since it clashes, according to their Military Doctrine, with their principle of maintaining momentum.)

The introduction into battle of the second echelon must not delay the attack. Each commander after engaging his second echelon, must once more set up a new second echelon or a general reserve from among the forces employed in the first stage.

10. This unit or formation (mainly from brigade level and above) will be deployed in depth mainly in two echelons: 2/3 of the forces in the first echelon and the remainder in the second. For a brigade this works out in such a manner that two battalions with the major part of the supporting forces will

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constitute the first echelon and one battalion practically without support, the second. The general reserve is allotted practically the same tasks as the second echelon. In addition to the second echelon and the general reserve, other kinds of reserves are organized: antitank artillery reserve, antitank pioneer reserve and armor reserve.

11. The same plan, approximately, which characterizes the offensive, applies to the defensive battle. This procedure results in the great depth specific to the Soviet Order of Battle - one of the main principles in Soviet Military Doctrine. It must be emphasized, however, that the depth of the plan does not signify that the army fights in "relays" (i.e. with a small part of the total of the assaulting forces); on the contrary, the rule is that nearly all the supporting arms, even those of the first echelon, including those of the echelons in the rear of the disposition up to and including those, of the army-group, take an active part in the support of the advanced echelons.
12. It must be stressed that both the great depth of the disposition and the manner of support by artillery fire accompanying the infantry and armor in the assault must serve to carry out the application of one of the principles of the Soviet Military Doctrine at the tactical and operational level, namely the continuity of movement.

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13. The disposition of troops in the defensive battle is, as previously stated, characterized by deployment in depth. A reinforced battalion holds a defended position of up to 2 km., whereby two of its companies are deployed in the first line, approximately 1.5 km. from the forward positions. A brigade group is deployed for defense in a position of 4-5 km. width and a depth of approximately 4 km. A division defends a position of 10-12 km. width and a depth of approximately 6 km. Depth of deployment is attained by the positioning of a part of the force (generally one third) in the second echelon. In the case of a brigade the latter prepares a defended position with a depth of 4-5 km., and having the same layout as the battle defended positions of the first echelon, that is, consisting of three lines of defense. Each such position is organized for all-round defense. The second echelon of the division organizes a defensive position at a depth of 5-6 km. in the same manner.
14. The division-defended locality includes in its final form three lines of defended positions at a distance of 1.5-2 km. from each other, each position consisting of at least three lines of entrenchments. The second echelons are allotted the following main tasks:

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- a. To be prepared to execute a counter-attack.<sup>3</sup>
  - b. To defend the rear positions and to check enemy forces which may have penetrated into the defended area.
15. A considerable part of the combat doctrine is devoted to the encounter battle. Such an engagement usually takes place in the depth of the disposition ( as a result of a counter-attack by the enemy) or in the depth of the defended area (as a result of counter-attack by defending forces). An encounter battle may also develop as a result of the engagement of enemy forces dropped from the air. The success of the encounter battle goes always to that force which first passes from the advance formation to the assault formation, that is, to the force which overtakes its adversary in deployment and opens fire first.
16. Only recently have the Soviets started to show an interest in the withdrawal battle. Use of the term "withdrawal" had until lately been regarded as prejudicial to the morale of the army. Only since 1956 have there appeared in Soviet military literature some articles on the "withdrawal maneuver". It may also be noted that until the present no definite views existed on this subject. The principles of the "withdrawal maneuver" are not, however, different to those employed by

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Western forces, except that the Soviets greatly emphasize the wide activities of the retreating forces, especially of those covering the withdrawal. This activity consists primarily in the execution of as many counter-attacks as possible, this being the most important expression of the defensive activity. The accepted view is that the main principle of the defensive battle requires the development of a large measure of initiative, namely, the execution of counter-attacks against an enemy who has occupied a defended area or part of it.

17. Much space is allotted in Soviet Military Doctrine to battles fought by forces which are encircled and how to break out of such encirclements. The reason for this may be found in the lessons learned by the Soviet army as a result of many encounters on the eastern front during the first years of World War II.
18. ~~Extreme~~ centralization characterizes the control of troops and especially the staff work. This centralization is exemplified, among other things, by the fact that subordinate units (formations) are always told their disposition as well as the direction of their main effort by superior command without regard to display of initiative by subordinate commanders. Another fact indicative of the above is the trend

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to centralize the artillery in one authority: according to regulations artillery units are allotted only for "general support", and only a small part, mainly antitank guns, are allotted "under command" for reinforcement of infantry and armored units, be it directly or for attached support. Besides this, a superior command (task force or division) is authorized to order artillery on the T/O of infantry units to execute fire-missions in support of another unit. On the other hand there exists a definite trend within the Soviet army of setting-up combat teams (on the battalion level) with a larger degree of independence. It is believed that these tendencies are the result of projected changes in organization relating to the use of nuclear bombs and shells which will find their expression in the future in a modified structure of the army in the field.

19. Unit or formation headquarters are always positioned in the rear, on the lines of the second echelon or the general reserve. During combat the unit commander operates from an observation post situated in a location enabling him to observe the battle field or at least the direction of the main effort. Together with the commander are the officers in charge of operations, intelligence and communications, and

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the observation post of the artillery commander supporting the unit (formation) is located nearby. Staff work is divided into the following stages:

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- a. State of preparedness, according to conditions prevailing in the theater of operations.
- b. Issuance of warning orders.
- c. Work of the R. Group.<sup>4</sup>
- d. Work of the O. Group.<sup>4</sup>
- e. Issuance of written battle orders.
- f. Organizing of cooperation.
- g. Control and support of subordinate units.

Soviet regulations require the commander to carry out three terrain reconnaissances: the first reconnaissance for the collection of facts which will enable him to arrive at a decision; the second reconnaissance - the issuance of orders in the field and the third reconnaissance for the purpose of organizing the cooperation and the coordination of units in the field during battle. The latter is the most important and the most necessary reconnaissance of the three.

20. Orders are divided into battle orders and executive orders. The first are issued at the tactical level (up to, and including, the corps) whereas the second apply to the operational

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level (army and above). Commanders at lower levels of command will give verbal orders only. There exists no standing operating procedure (SOP), its place being taken, according to Soviet views, by Field Service Regulations. Battle orders are divided into two main parts: operational battle orders and "rear" orders, that is, logistics. In addition to orders, several appendices are published, such as: tables of the plan of battle (coordination of fire and movement), the organization of antitank defense, organization of antiaircraft defense, intelligence appendix (table of intelligence procedure), communications, (communication orders, communications by wire and radio, signals, and runners).

21. The main part of the battle order is, of course, the first part designated as "operational part" (OP). It is divided as follows:
  - a. The enemy.
  - b. Mission of unit as formulated by the higher echelon.
  - c. Missions of adjoining forces and dividing boundaries.
  - d. Commander's decision (how mission will be carried out, direction of main effort, general order of battle, and timing of operation).



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- e, f, and g. Definition of missions of subordinate units, allotment of support and its composition, which part of it is placed under local command and which part is allotted to general support.
- h. Artillery missions.
- i. Organization of the armored reserve and its tasks.
- j. Tasks of air force allotted to force carrying out mission.
- k. Mobile antitank reserves: location, organization and duty.
- l. General duties of engineers troops.
- m. Location of headquarters, OP of commander and axis of leap frogging. Orders relating to supply, maintenance and evacuation are appended to the second part of the battle order, that is, the rear order (logistics).

Besides the commanding officer, the battle order is signed by the chief of staff. The latter is the first deputy of the commander and is the only officer in the unit (formation) authorized to issue orders in the name of his commanding officer.

- 22. Soviet Military Doctrine emphasizes the fact, that the ultimate success of any operation or battle depends largely on exact and practiced rear service (logistics) work. This does not imply, however, that the quartermaster or his duties

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are in any way highly regarded, especially at the lower echelons of command. It may be noted that defects in the working of the rear services, especially where the supply of rations and personal equipment is concerned, are largely compensated for by the Russian soldiers inherent ability to fend for himself as well as by his being used to difficult living conditions.

#### Functions of Arms and Services

23. The infantry is the foundation of the Soviet Army. This arm is capable of fighting on every type of terrain, under any climatic condition, whether it is day or night; it is the only arm capable of holding ground for an extended length of time. All other arms support the infantry, and the commander of an operation is always the infantry commander. He and his staff plan and determine inter-arms and inter-service cooperation. Whereas the organization of infantry units from the battalion up to the larger units, includes other arms as well, it will be found that the infantry units and formations are composed of combined arms. Consequently, the infantry officer is also termed "combined arms officer", this fact being one of the reasons for the high prestige and seniority accorded him.<sup>5</sup>

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24. For purposes of combat the infantry battalion constitutes the main tactical unit, the same applies to the infantry division from the operational point of view. Various types of infantry are known to exist: mechanized infantry units and formations, armored infantry, airborne, mountain and marine infantry.<sup>6</sup> all infantry units are organized on the principle of three, i.e., three sections to the platoon, three platoons to the company, three companies to the battalion. The brigade is composed of three battalions, and the division of three brigades. From the corps up, this formation is not necessarily maintained. Thus there are corps comprising two or four divisions, even though the majority of Soviet corps during World War II consisted of three divisions. Infantry corps are normally composed of two mechanized and one armored infantry division.
25. All infantry units have recently been issued with automatic weapons (submachine guns and self-loading rifles) which enables an infantry battalion, defending a position of a width of 2 km. to cover each meter of front with a density of 9-10 rounds per minute. (During World War II this ratio did not exceed 5-6 rounds.)

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26. The following qualities of the armored force are constantly being emphasized by the Soviets:

- a. Great shock power stemming from the fire or organic weapons and the thickness of armor.
- b. Speedy movement; large mobility.
- c. Maneuverability.

These characteristics of armor may be utilized, according to the doctrine, either by combining the action of tanks with infantry (for example, when assaulting an enemy-held position) or by independent action, carried out, for instance, in the depth of the enemy's dispositions. Armored units are consequently divided in two main groups:

- a. Units whose mission is close quarters support to the infantry.
- b. Units intended for independent action.

In the first group belong all armored units on the T/O of infantry brigades and divisions as well as armored units proper, such as tank battalions and brigades, medium and heavy self-propelled artillery mounts (54) belonging to general headquarters reserve.

27. Tank units which belong to the second group are organized in tank and armored divisions, including armored corps and armies. The main task of these formations is penetration into a breach

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in the enemy's defense positions during the first stages of the assault and the utilization of the success for a breakthrough in depth. These armored formations and combat teams are called "Fast Task Forces". Tanks detailed for direct infantry support are generally placed under the command of the infantry commander for a predetermined time, usually until the completion of the first ("near") task of the unit concerned. During battle the methods of support by tanks may frequently be changed by the officer commanding with parts of them being allotted to units of the second echelon, thrown into battle at the appropriate moment.

28. The standard support given to an infantry battalion during offensive actions amounts to one medium tank battalion. Generally the tanks are out in front of the infantry, their task being to pave the way. The typical assault formation is as follows: the first wave is composed of medium tanks, followed at a distance of 400-600 meters by the second wave, consisting of heavy tanks and tank destroyers. These are followed immediately, at a distance not exceeding 100 meters, by the infantry. During the assault of an especially heavily fortified position, the heavy tanks will move in the first wave. When attacking a fortified or built-up area, "storm-teams" are organized, composed mainly of one heavy tank platoon

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(two tanks),<sup>7</sup> supported by one assault-gun, one towed anti-tank gun, one group of riflemen, one group of assault pioneers, and flamethrowers.

29. It is apparent that the main function of tanks in the assault lies in the utilization of their shock-power, and not only their fire-power. The use of tanks as a firing base is very uncommon. Sometimes, part of the armor is assigned a fire mission proper but this will only happen during the stage of artillery-preparation. Tanks operating in the field keep a distance of 30-50 meters between each other, resulting in a density of a first wave assault of 20-30 tanks per km. of front line.
30. In the defensive battle tanks are also used although in smaller numbers, by infantry units of the first echelon. Great importance is attached by the Soviets to the presence of tanks in the defense line of the infantry in order to raise their fighting spirit. Such tanks are used as stationary fire positions. They are dug in and alternative positions are prepared for them. By this method the antitank dispositions are strengthened by the presence of the tanks in the first echelon. Tank support, characteristic to a battalion in defense, is composed of one medium tank platoon or assault guns (2-5 tanks LK.O).

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31. The remainder of the tanks under command of infantry units or formations holding a defended area are concentrated in an "armored reserve" which constitute the main force for the execution of pre-planned counter-attacks, or the reinforcement of the mobile antitank artillery reserve. An armored reserve will usually plan and prepare ambushes on the possible avenues of approach of enemy armor. Armor, as in the case with other arms, is subject to the rule of concentration of the tank force in the direction of the main effort, which means that infantry units assaulting in secondary directions may be left with a very limited degree of armored support, or none at all.
32. Proceeding from the assumption that continuous fire by tanks, if unaimed, is more effective than the exact aiming of single rounds, medium tanks of the T-34 type usually fire on the move without stopping to aim. The heavy tanks, however, and the assault-guns are forced to fire when stationary because of the technical limitations of their construction.
33. Fire power constitutes one of the basic elements in warfare.<sup>8</sup> As the chief dispenser of fire, artillery is the most important among the supporting arms. Armor and infantry are unable, according to Soviet doctrine, to carry out their tasks without

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previously destroying or at least neutralizing, enemy weapons and personnel. Indeed during the entire course of the fighting, artillery is the main arm continuously laying down fire on the enemy and his positions.

34. Since its inception the Russian artillery has enjoyed a tradition of technical excellence. Its basic equipment is organized as follows:

- a. 76 mm. field gun adapted for indirect fire as well as for direct laying.
- b. 122 mm. howitzer.
- c. Mortars of the following caliber: 82 mm., 120 mm., and 132 mm., ("Katyusha").

Recently 85 mm. and 100 mm. guns have been put into service in great numbers, mainly as antitank guns. In addition to the above there are 57 mm. guns in the battalion antitank platoon. Artillery on the T/O of units and formations up to army level, constitute approximately 50 percent of the entire Soviet artillery strength. The other 50 percent, organized into artillery - including mortar - battalions, regiments, brigades and divisions, constitute the artillery reserve of general headquarters. Those artillery units are placed "under command" of infantry and tank formations for the execution of combat assignments and other missions. In accordance



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with the principle of the concentration of force in the direction of the main effort it is evident that units and formations instrumental in carrying out the latter are supported by a greater concentration of artillery than those allotted secondary missions.

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35. From the organic artillery and units of the general headquarters reserve, regimental and divisional artillery teams, as well as corps and army teams are organized during combat. The chief fire power of these teams is allotted to the support of units operating in the direction of the main effort. The artillery fire plan is planned at a high level- chiefly at army level, and distributed to all army units together with the appropriate code for requesting all types of artillery fire. Commanders of lower echelons are, however, allowed a fire reserve to be employed according to their own plans in case of necessity. The greatest concentration of fire operations planning and control exists during the initial stages of the battle. During the later stages a considerable amount of dispersion is prevalent and commanders of units and formations revert to nearly complete control of both the organic and supporting artillery units.

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36. The main types of artillery fire/as follows:

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- a. Area fire: The Soviets maintain that in order to destroy or neutralize dug-in enemy personnel or weapons, an area fire of 20 minutes duration will be required. The fire of a battery of 122 mm. howitzers serves as the main basis for calculations (12 barrels whose beaten area covers approximately 200 by 300 meters).
- b. SOS fire: This is a linear fire concentration laid down directly (100-200 m.) in front of positions or entrenchments occupied by Soviet infantry or armor. The calculation basis is the 122 mm. battery (four guns) capable of laying down such fire over a width of 100 meters. SOS fire is generally planned for a battery and the length of the linear concentration is 300 meters.
- c. Point concentration: For the destruction of specific targets, such as: tanks, pill boxes, etc. This task is carried out by guns fired point-blank. Great importance is attached to this type of fire and even during the preparatory stages allowance is made for a certain period of firing for the destruction of enemy weapons by direct laying. Such fire is also

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applied during an assault and after a breakthrough by guns operating in conjunction with infantry and armor<sup>9</sup> for the destruction of point targets at point-blank range. It is self-evident that these guns play a vital part in antitank defense.

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37. The fire plan in the offensive battle operates in the following manner: Everything included within the activities of the artillery during an offensive battle is termed "artillery offensive" and divided into three stages:
- a. Artillery preparation.
  - b. Supporting the assault of infantry and armor.
  - c. Supporting the fighting in the rear of the enemy's positions.

The duration of the artillery preparation depends on the amount of available guns and ammunition, the deployment of the enemy and the strength of his defenses. As previously mentioned, the destruction of entrenched enemy forces requires an area fire of 20 minutes' duration by artillery. This fire is planned to cover all enemy entrenchments, observation posts, artillery positions, and headquarters. Taking into consideration the deployment of Western forces of 200-220 guns per km. of assault front (in the direction of the main effort) will require an artillery preparation of approximately 60-90

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minutes' duration. This density of concentration is attained by the participation during the artillery preparation of every gun and mortar arrayed in depth of all echelons, up to army-group level.

38. The artillery preparation commences and terminates generally with a volley of rocket launchers; these volleys also serve as conventional signs (the first for the start of the preparation, the second for its termination). The end of the artillery preparation also introduces the second stage of artillery offensive, as well as "H" hour (the time of the infantry and armor assault on the front lines of the enemy's defenses). Depending on the availability at this stage of sufficient guns and ammunition, the artillery fire usually is planned in the form of a moving barrage ("leapfrogging"). This fire ("mopping-up fire") precedes the assaulting infantry and armored columns by 100-200 meters, and is planned as a linear barrage along the frontal sector, where those forces which are carrying out the main task are engaged. It advances in bounds of 100-meter intervals. Differentiation is made between main lines and intermediate lines, depending on the enemy's deployment and fortifications. The following system applies: The first line is generally identical with the second line of the defense positions and

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constitutes the main line of fire. On this line a barrage of 7-10 minutes' duration is laid down and after the giving of a conventional sign the fire is automatically advanced from an intermediate to a preplanned line in the rear of the former (2-3 minutes fire on the intermediate line). On the arrival of the barrage at a new main line, the fire is concentrated on the latter for another 7-10 minutes. If it is necessary, fire is reverted to the main lines by a conventional sign. The depth of the leap-frogging barrage is generally identical with the depth of the first objective (the first task) of the assaulting division, i.e., the occupation of the deployment area of the enemy artillery, computed at a depth of 3 km. approximately. On an area where a leap-frogging barrage is not laid down, preplanned fire concentrations and bursts are directed. During the third state of the "artillery offensive" only fire bursts are employed, including fire concentrations, and in case of necessity, SOS fire, applied in this case to stop any possible counter-attack.

39. The main tasks of the corps and army-group artillery consists in counter-battery fire and long-range shelling, laid down on the depth of the enemy dispositions, on the possible lines of approach of his reserves. The standard artillery

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support accorded an infantry battalion in battle consists of a battery of field artillery (12 guns), a heavy mortar battery, an antitank battery, in addition to the organic antitank guns of the battalion. In addition to the above, brigade and division artillery teams are employed in the direction of the battalion attack. The brigade is supported by 3-5 artillery batteries, 2-3 of them directly supporting infantry battalions and the remainder for execution of the brigade objective.

40. The following fire tasks are planned for the defensive battle:
- a. Long range fire on the enemy's approaches and his assembly areas.
  - b. Fire concentrations (defensive fire), on the enemy's forming-up areas, as well as on selected area targets within the defended sector.
  - c. SOS fire, in front of the positions and inside the defense perimeter.
  - d. Point-blank fire on all guns inside the defense perimeter, constituting, as already stated, the outline of the anti-tank fire plan as well as the basis for the entire defense fire plan.
  - e. Retreating barrage, employed similarly to that in the offensive but in a different direction, in order to contain attacks by enemy armor, or at least to separate the infantry from their tank support in the assault.

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- f. Fire bursts and concentrations for supporting/preplanned counter-attacks.
41. The number of artillery units employed in supporting the defensive battle normally average one quarter of the number mentioned as required for the offensive, that is, the infantry battalion is as a rule directly supported by one battery of field artillery and one battery of antitank guns. The density of artillery in defense amounts to 40-50 guns to one km. of front line at tactical depth (depth of deployment of a corps in defense).
42. The antitank artillery is allotted the main tasks for all types of fighting in the antitank disposition. Part of the antitank guns are positioned in the front line echelons and the remainder is organized into mobile antitank artillery reserves. The following formula is employed for calculating the requirements of antitank guns: The amount of estimated enemy armor divided by three (the Soviets claim that one antitank gun is capable of destroying or disabling three enemy tanks). The tasks of the mobile antitank reserves, organized both in defensive and offensive operations, include the strengthening of density of the required antitank artillery in those frontal sectors where the main direction of effort of enemy armor has been detected. The main tasks of the antitank

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reserves in the offensive are the stopping of enemy armored counter-attacks. The strength of these reserves is on the average: one battery to an infantry brigade, one battery (12 guns) to the division, one regiment (24 guns) to the corps and one brigade to the army.

43. The importance of the antitank reserve in the defense may be demonstrated by the lessons of such operations by the Red Army in the Kursk region during July 1943. Against the main effort of the Germans, attacking with armored support at a density of 100 tanks per km. of frontal sector, the Soviets established at the tactical depth of their defensive front an antitank concentration of about 18 guns per km. of front line. However, as early as the end of the first day of this operation, the Soviet antitank concentrations, by activating the antitank reserves of the operational echelons and by switching anti-tank reserves from the passive sectors of the front line, attained a density of 81 guns per kilometer of front line. This successful operation brought about the containment of the German offensive and the destruction of the major part of its attacking armor.
44. The standard composition of the antiaircraft artillery division  
anti  
consists of two light/aircraft brigades (37 mm.) and one medium



antiaircraft brigade (85 mm.) or alternatively, of two light and two heavy brigades. Antiaircraft artillery units are already found at the brigade level, but because of their limited capabilities their main task is the defense of the headquarters area. The main tasks of antiaircraft defense are carried out by antiaircraft artillery divisions on the T/O of armies and army-groups. The actions of these divisions are planned at high level, their mission being the antiaircraft defense of forces operating in the direction of the main effort, with priority given to the artillery deployment areas.

45. Engineer units are found at the brigade level, (platoon or company) and at the divisional level (a battalion consisting of 3-4 companies). At army level there is a field engineers brigade of 4-6 battalions. The main tasks of the engineers are:
- a. Mining and demolition.
  - b. Engineering support to infantry, armor and artillery for the crossing of rivers.
  - c. Breaching of enemy obstacles (minefields).
46. One of the special tasks of the engineers is the combatting of enemy armor. For this purpose mobile engineers reserves are organized at all levels, commencing from the brigade,

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which are allotted transport and whose tasks in the defense include the mining of enemy armor approach lines if the latter have penetrated the depth of the defense positions. In the offensive, engineer reserves operate against armor carrying out counter-attacks. The tasks of these reserves are, of course, carried out in close liaison with the mobile anti-tank artillery reserves and all other forces engaged in combating enemy armor.

47. The density of mines in Soviet laid minefields is remarkable, amounting to a rate of 1,000 to 3,000 antitank and antipersonnel mines per km. of front line (at the tactical level).<sup>10</sup> The breaching of enemy minefields during the offensive is the task of groups of engineers (one group to each lane of clearing), carried out during the night preceding "H" hour - one lane of a width of six meters to each infantry platoon in the first wave. For tanks these lanes are widened to 10 meters. During the assault proper, teams of engineers whose tasks are the breaching of enemy fortifications, are attached to infantry and armored units.
48. In all infantry and armored units from the brigade level upwards there are chemical warfare units whose duties are:
- a. The organization of antigas defense.<sup>11</sup>

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- b. The organization of antinuclear defense.
  - c. The organization and operation of smoke screening.
  - d. The organization and operation of flame throwing devices.
49. Antigas defense includes the following activities: intelligence, observation, combating the enemy's gas launching facilities and countering the results of enemy gas attacks. The same applies to nuclear defense activities.
50. The operation of smoke screens is planned by chemical warfare officers, in addition to smoke laying activities carried out by the infantry, armor, mortars and aircraft. Devices for the laying of smoke screens include hand grenades, smoke candles, smoke bombs and shells, special installations in aircraft and ground installations called "fumators" (on the organization of chemical warfare units allotted to armies and above). During World War II, temporary improvised means were utilized by the Soviets, such as the burning of trees, undergrowth, etc. The use of colored smoke is not developed.
51. Flame thrower units are set up at army level and above. They are equipped with two main types of flame throwers:
- a. Light flame throwers, used as one of the means of combatting fortified positions.

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- b. Heavy flame throwers - one of the means employed against enemy armor.

The fuel for the light flame throwers is pack-carried by soldiers. The heavy flame throwers are barrels containing inflammable liquid dug into the ground and operated during attacks by enemy armor. The effective range of a heavy flame thrower is up to 100 meters.

52. Aircraft used by the Soviet army consists of the following types:

- a. Fighter aircraft.
- b. Assault aircraft.
- c. Light bombers.
- d. Heavy bombers.
- e. Reconnaissance aircraft.
- f. Transport aircraft.
- g. Medical aircraft.

Aircraft are organized into regiments, brigades, divisions, and corps, according to type. The highest formation is the air-army, composed of variable number of units and formations of aircraft of different types. The average number of aircraft in the air-division is about 100 planes. In every ~~army~~-group there is one air-army (occasionally there are two).

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53. As already noted, permanent inter-arms and inter-service co-operation is one of the principles of Soviet military doctrine. Their assault aircraft ("Sturmovik") is a typical example for this tendency. The main task of the assault aircraft is the support of ground forces, primarily during attack. The assault aircraft was created at the beginning of World War II, primarily for destroying the large number of tanks employed by the Germans. This is an armored, twin-seater piston-engined aircraft with an operational speed of about 350 kph. It is armed with two 20 mm. or 37 mm. cannon, three medium machine guns of 14.5 mm. caliber, 8-10 rockets and space for about 200 antitank bombs<sup>12</sup> with a weight of approximately 2 kg. each, or alternatively HE or other bombs, with a weight totalling 300 kg.
54. During World War II assault aircraft of several makes were utilized (IL-2, IL-9, IL-10 and IL-10P) as support aircraft in conjunction with infantry and armor and this type of aircraft has lasted until the present. In view of the relatively low speed of the assault aircraft its main task is tactical support.
55. During the offensive assault aircraft operate on the average in teams of ten, flying in front of the infantry and armor attacking on the ground, at a safety range of 500 meters in

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advance of the troops. The turning radius of any one group of aircraft is about 2 km. thus enabling each group to support one infantry division on an average sector of 2 km. width. Each group of assault aircraft is capable of tactically supporting ground forces for a period of 20 minutes, after which it is relieved by another group. The task of these groups is the destruction or neutralization of enemy weapons impeding the advance of the ground forces. A group of these aircraft is capable of strafing with their armor-piercing shells the forming-up area of a tank battalion, thereby delaying the timing of operations by 2-3 hours.

56. Ground-air coordination is carried out by the attachment of air force liaison officers to the infantry divisions of the first echelon or to the armored units and formations operating in the depth of the enemy dispositions. By means of their radio transmitters, these liaison officers are capable of:
- a. Establishing contact with airfields in order to launch the aircraft.
  - b. Establishing contact with aircraft aloft directing them to ground targets.
  - c. Contacting their superior air force headquarters.

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The air liaison officer's position is close to that of the supported infantry or armored formation commander and he also serves as the commander's technical adviser.

57. The planning of air force operations is concentrated at the highest command levels, at armies and even army-groups. The entire complex of aerial operations during the offensive is termed "aerial offensive" and consists of three main stages:
- a. Stage of primary aerial preparations - to secure local control or, at least, superiority in the air. This stage operates for some days prior to "D" day.
  - b. Stage of direct aerial preparations - carried out concurrently with the artillery preparation. This stage is mainly marked by the activity of bomber aircraft, whose task is the neutralization of hostile artillery positions and the main points of enemy resistance.  
(Safety margin - 1,000 meters from the line of contact.)
  - c. Stage of support of infantry and armor, carried out by assault aircraft, as described above.

All these operations are, of course, supported by jet-propelled fighter planes.

58. Although the Red Army was the first to possess a paratroop unit and to carry out investigations concerning their

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utilization, the Soviet paratroopers lack battle experience. During World War II paratroopers were only employed sporadically in small units for intelligence and harassing purposes. This may be explained by the fact, that duties normally assigned to paratroopers were carried out by the numerous bands of partisans operating in the rear of the Germans. Only at the time of the Manchurian operation during August 1945<sup>13</sup> were paratroop units employed, mainly of battalion strength, primarily in order to occupy vital points abandoned without fight by the retreating or surrendering Japanese troops. At the present time, paratroopers are organized in divisions of three brigades with the main task of occupying vital points at the operational depth of the enemy dispositions and holding these points until relieved by troops attacking frontally.

#### The Navy

59. The Soviet navy lacks substantial experience in naval operations proper. Its main task is the defense of coastal communications and this cooperation expresses itself in landing operations and fire support by warships.
60. During World War II a part of considerable importance was played by the river flotillas. Their tasks consisted in:
  - a. Supporting with their fire assaults carried out along the river course.



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- b. The transporting of combat teams ordered to execute landings in the rear of the enemy's positions.
  - c. Logistic transportation.
  - d. Ferrying troops from one river bank to another (supporting river crossings).
61. Services of the rear is a term given to those echelons employed in all types of logistic work. Following are the main features of Soviet logistic organization.
- a. The brigade is the smallest logistic accounting unit.
  - b. The maintenance echelons are: the supreme command, the army-group, the army, the division and the brigade (the corps does not constitute a logistic maintenance unit).
  - c. At these levels there operates an assistant commander of rear services. This officer is not subordinate to the unit (formation) chief of staff but solely coordinates his activities with the latter.
  - d. Logistic operations in the battalion are the responsibility of the officer in charge of the quartermaster (services) platoon,
  - e. At all levels of command the issuance of quartermaster supplies from the higher to the lower level is mandatory. The same principle applies to maintenance. With regard to evacuation, the principle is the reverse from the lower level to the higher one applies.

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- f. The problem of operational movements is dealt with at unit (formation) headquarters by the "G" Branch, whereas logistic movements are the responsibility of the unit (formation) second in command in charge of rear services.
- g. At army level and above a military transportation department exists at formation headquarters, charged with the planning of all kinds of movements by rail.
- h. The maintenance, construction and repairing of roads are dealt with by the rear services. At levels from the army and above, there exists on the staff of the second in command in charge of rear services, a road department, under whose command are two or three engineer battalions, specialized in road construction and bridging.
- i. The ordnance service is subordinate to the artillery commander of the formation. The formation ordnance officer solely coordinates his operations with the staff of the second in command of the formation in charge of rear services. (The organization of ammunition transport and the preparation of ammunition dumps.)
- j. The medical service is subordinate to the second in command in charge of rear services.

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Trends of Military Doctrine and Existing Organization

62. Soviet military thinking is at present influenced by the changes introduced in the armies of the Western powers. Until 1951 the official Soviet position regarding the use of nuclear arms was based on the assumption that the enemy would employ nuclear weapons, whereas the forces of the Eastern Bloc countries would not use the new weapons. At the time emphasis was laid on the defensive battle in general and on antinuclear defense in particular. With the necessity of the dispersion of troops in nuclear warfare, changes were introduced in the traditional disposition of Soviet defense. Sector boundaries of formations were enlarged by about 50 percent in length and depth. In addition, the depth of defended areas, allotted to higher echelon, was considerably increased. If, for example, the second defended area of the infantry corps was located at a distance of 10-15 kms. from the line of advance positions, this distance has at present been increased to 25 km.
63. The existence of nuclear weapons has forced the Soviets to devote more attention to the subject of fortifications. Digging-in, fortifications and other kinds of field works are now given a larger scope than during World War II. It

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was stressed that a much larger amount of attention must be given to the mechanization of digging-in operations.

64. Soviet military doctrine maintains that one means of protection against nuclear weapons consists in maintaining permanent and close contact with the enemy in the front line, thus impeding the latter's use of nuclear weapons. In about 1952 changes were also introduced into the chapters of the military doctrine dealing with the offensive and any other form of battle. In the Soviet army's search for new methods the following changes, applicable to the present time, were made:
- a. The importance of the maneuver has been increased, as well as the importance of adaptability and mobility, together with the emphasis put on the necessity of displaying initiative by every commander irrespective of rank.
  - b. The employment in the offensive of nuclear weapons decreases the need for artillery fire. The density of artillery in the offensive has consequently been reduced to 100-120 guns per km. of frontal sector.
  - c. The need for speedy action has made imperative the employment of armored formations already in the first echelon and during the first stage of an operation.

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The general number of armored units and formations has been increased accordingly and armored units were introduced in infantry formations.

- d. The need has been admitted for a dispersal of forces on the battlefield and in the theater of operations. The necessity of decreasing the echelons of command is now being contemplated by the Soviets. Proposals were made for the elimination of the battalion level, or the brigade level as well as the corps level. Part of these proposals are already being carried out in various units and formations at the experimental stage. In addition, it has been suggested to organize combat teams on the Western pattern (without admitting this fact) and to increase the number of units under the command of any one headquarters (a transition from the key figure three to that of four and five in unit organizations).
- e. At the present time the Soviets emphasize even more the increase in the speed of operations and the need for surprise action as well as the need for shortening the preparatory stages before battle. New command methods are being taught accordingly, and stress is put on the brevity of orders, improvements in communications and the weeding-out of staff personnel.

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- f. More attention than previously is now being paid by the Soviets to the subject of night operations, the crossing of rivers during the advance and the encounter battle.
65. All these changes are at the present in the research stage. It is believed therefore for the assumption that forces organized and instructed according to Soviet military doctrine will, under conditions termed at present "limited warfare", operate as described in this report.
66. Attached for your information and action are the following diagrams:
- a. Principal Elements of the Supreme Command (Diagram L).
  - b. Principal Elements of the Army-group, Army and Infantry Corps (Diagram M).
  - c. Principal Elements of the Infantry Division (Diagram N).
  - d. Principal Elements of the Armored Division and the Tank Division Combat Units (Diagrams O and S).
  - e. Principal Elements of the Infantry Brigade (Diagram P).
  - f. Principal Elements of the Infantry Battalion (Diagram Q).
- Please return the attachments to CI/SPD upon completion of your action.

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Comments:

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1. Warfare is not determined by objectives, but rather by directions and lines of terrain. The objectives are always certain reservoirs of enemy manpower.
2. As "tactical cooperation" may also be designated the action of a single arm, or part of the campaign forces directly influencing the actions of another arm or unit. (For example, the laying down of artillery fire on an objective impeding the assault of infantry~~or~~ armor.) "Operational cooperation" may also include a situation wherein the action of one arm or parts of an operational force indirectly influence the actions of another part (such as, the dropping of paratroops in the deep rear of the enemy or an aerial bombardment of supply bases in the depth of the enemy's dispositions thus impeding the logistic potential of the enemy organization as a whole.
3. Each counter-attack must be authorized by higher command. The reason for this rule lies in the doubts of the higher echelon as to whether sufficient forces will be left in the depth of the defended locality in order to ensure its defense (battalion or brigade position). There exists even a tendency at all levels up to, and including, the division, to avoid carrying

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out a counter-attack and to employ for this purpose the reserve or the second echelon of the corps or army. Nevertheless, commanders at all levels, from the section upward, are instructed that in the event of the breach of any defensive positions a counter-attack is imperative in order to rout the enemy forces which have penetrated and to restore the former defensive line.

4. Those terms are not used by the Soviets. The literal translation would be: "Reconnaissance Group" - "procedure followed by the commander and his staff prior to the decision", and the translation of "Orders Group" - "issuing of the decision by the commander."
5. According to Soviet regulations, all officers belonging to arms other than infantry are required to salute an infantry officer of equal rank first.
6. The Soviet army plans to mechanize the entire infantry but this process is as yet incomplete.
7. A medium tank platoon consists of five tanks, whereas a heavy tank platoon has only two tanks.
8. During World War II the artillery was termed by Stalin "The God of Battle".
9. A 76 mm. towed field gun is used in assaults in conjunction with infantry, operating openly at point-blank range.



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10. In a defense layout several minefields are to be found one behind the other.
11. Soviet regulations do not mention the fact that chemical units may also, when required, carry out poison gas attacks.
12. An aerial bomb with fins and percussion fuze.
13. The Soviet army marched into Manchuria at the end of World War II at the time of the Japanese surrender.

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Explanation of Diagram L

1. The Military Council is an advisory body to the Minister of Defense. Its members are the Minister of Defense, his deputies headed by the chief of the general staff, the head of the personnel department and the representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.
2. Matters concerning military instruction are not controlled by one person. At the beginning of each school year a military training order is issued by the Minister of Defense regarding the policies to be followed, which serves as a guide for the training authorities in making specific schedules. The yearly training plan is compiled by the operations branch. In addition to this, the latter organizes formation exercises from the corps level upward, as well as map exercises for the headquarters of commands and the Supreme Command. The military training program for all arms and services of the army is compiled and planned by the staffs concerned.
3. The ordnance branch is subordinate to the chief inspector of artillery and charged with the supply and maintenance of weapons and ammunition for all arms and services.
4. The intelligence branch engages in espionage and in field intelligence training. Matters pertaining to counterespionage

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are concentrated in the counterespionage service, whose official representatives operate at all levels down to battalions. Besides this, a special branch in the Ministry of the Interior (MVD) is concerned with espionage.

5. The head of the signals branch serves also as the commander of the signal corps.
6. The transportation branch (railroad) is charged with military movements by rail and with the operation of a transportation network for military needs. Representatives of this branch operate at the headquarters of all armies and army-groups as well as at the major railroad stations.
7. [In wartime] the chief task of the Historical Branch consists in studying the lessons of the war and their publication. Within the framework of this branch there is a publications section which edits and publishes all military regulations.
8. The roads section plans the operation and maintenance of roads for military purposes.
9. The organizations branch is primarily concerned with the preparation and arrangement of the T/O and equipment in peace and war.
10. The manpower potential branch deals exclusively with the affairs of the enlisted personnel (officer affairs being handled by the staff/branch "personnel branch"). It publishes orders

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for the call-up of recruits and the discharge of soldiers after completion of their compulsory service.

11. The mobilization branch is in charge of mobilization war plans.
12. The technical potential branch plans the mobilization of the national technical resources and the preparation of civilian industry for war.
13. The topographical branch executes topographical surveys of the country for military purposes and publishes all types of military maps.
14. The Deputy Minister of Defense for political affairs is under the Minister of Defense, as well as the Central Committee of the Party. The commander is the chief of the entire political officer personnel, distributed throughout the command echelons down to companies (sometimes even platoons). The political staff is charged with the dissemination of propaganda, the maintenance of morale and with the organization and supervision of Communist Party and Komsomol cells in the army.

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Explanation of Diagram M

1. The framework of army-groups. The organization of the army and the corps does not conform to a fixed pattern and is liable to variations according to strategical and operational exigencies. The T/O of headquarters and equipment are, however, determined in advance.
2. From time to time armies are set up which are not subordinate to any army-group headquarters, but to the Supreme Command. This instance may occur in the event of independent operation by an army as a result of limited operational space in its sector. (As, for instance, the independent army "Primorskaya", which operated during 1944 on the Black Sea coast).
3. A corps is not allotted units or rear installations and its logistics are maintained by channels leading from army rear to division rear. A corps headquarters deals solely with operational matters; the rear services of formations under the command of corps are only supervised by the latter.

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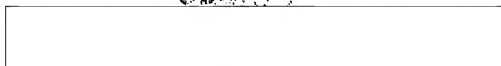
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Explanation of Diagram N

1. The chief of staff is the first deputy of the commander and the only one authorized to issue any orders whatever in the latter's name.
2. The operations branch is also charged with training.
3. The manpower branch deals with matters pertaining both to officers and enlisted men.
4. The administrative department serves the headquarters in all kinds of maintenance matters.
5. All special staff officers of a command (intelligence, communications, engineers, chemical, artillery, and medical) are coordination officers as well as being in charge of the units of various arms. In addition to this, any such unit has its own commanding officer, the exception to this being the officer commanding the divisional tank unit, who is a specialist as well as a coordination officer.
6. The staff of <sup>the</sup>artillery commander conducts the divisional support center. To him are subordinate all artillery units allotted to the division for combat. Artillery headquarters comprises the following departments: operations, intelligence and communications.
7. The veterinary officer is responsible for the inspection of meat in the mess halls.

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Explanation of Diagrams O and S



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1. Armored and armored infantry divisions are intended to serve as fast combat teams, operating either independently or within the framework of corps and armored armies.
2. The main difference between the two formations consists in the proportion between the number of tank units and the number of armored infantry units.
3. There are transport battalions in all armored infantry brigades, transporting the entire unit, their weapons and supplies. A characteristic vehicle is the BTR-152, which is an armored personnel carrier.

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Explanation of Diagram P

The organization of the infantry brigade (regiment) resembles the division in its main features. There is also a resemblance in the functions of the staff officers, the exception being the brigade artillery officer, who does not organize the brigade support center and during battle solely deals with those artillery units set up for point-blank firing. The brigade support center is operated by the commander of the brigade artillery team and his staff, who are also the commander and staff of the main artillery unit (formation) in this team.

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Explanation of Diagram Q

1. Only two types of machine guns exist in the Soviet infantry:  
the light machine gun (RKM) as the sectional machine gun and the heavy machine gun, 7.89 mm. tripod-mounted, serving as company and battalion machine gun. The 12.7 mm. and 14.5 mm. are termed "super-heavy machine guns".
2. There is no weapons section in the platoon. There exists the tendency to ballance the fire power of the section by two light machine guns, but there exists also the opposite trend, to reduce the number of soldiers in the section.
3. The transportation section is intended to transport one quarter of the battalion ammunition supply. The supply section operates the battalion mess hall and carries two supplies of battalion rations.
4. The term "first line transport" is not known in the Soviet army.

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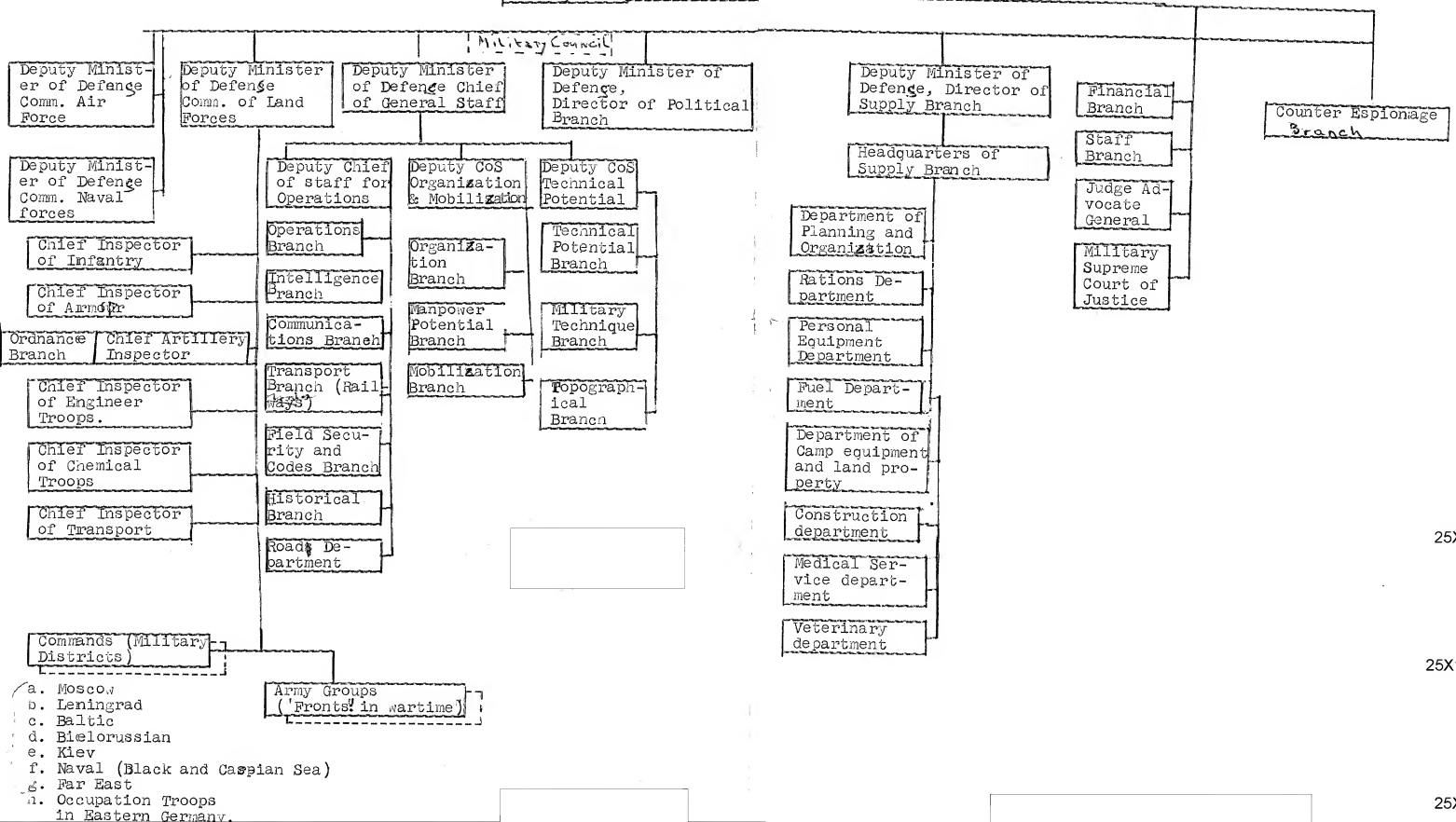
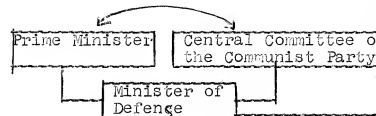
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DIAGRAM

Principal Elements of the Supreme Command

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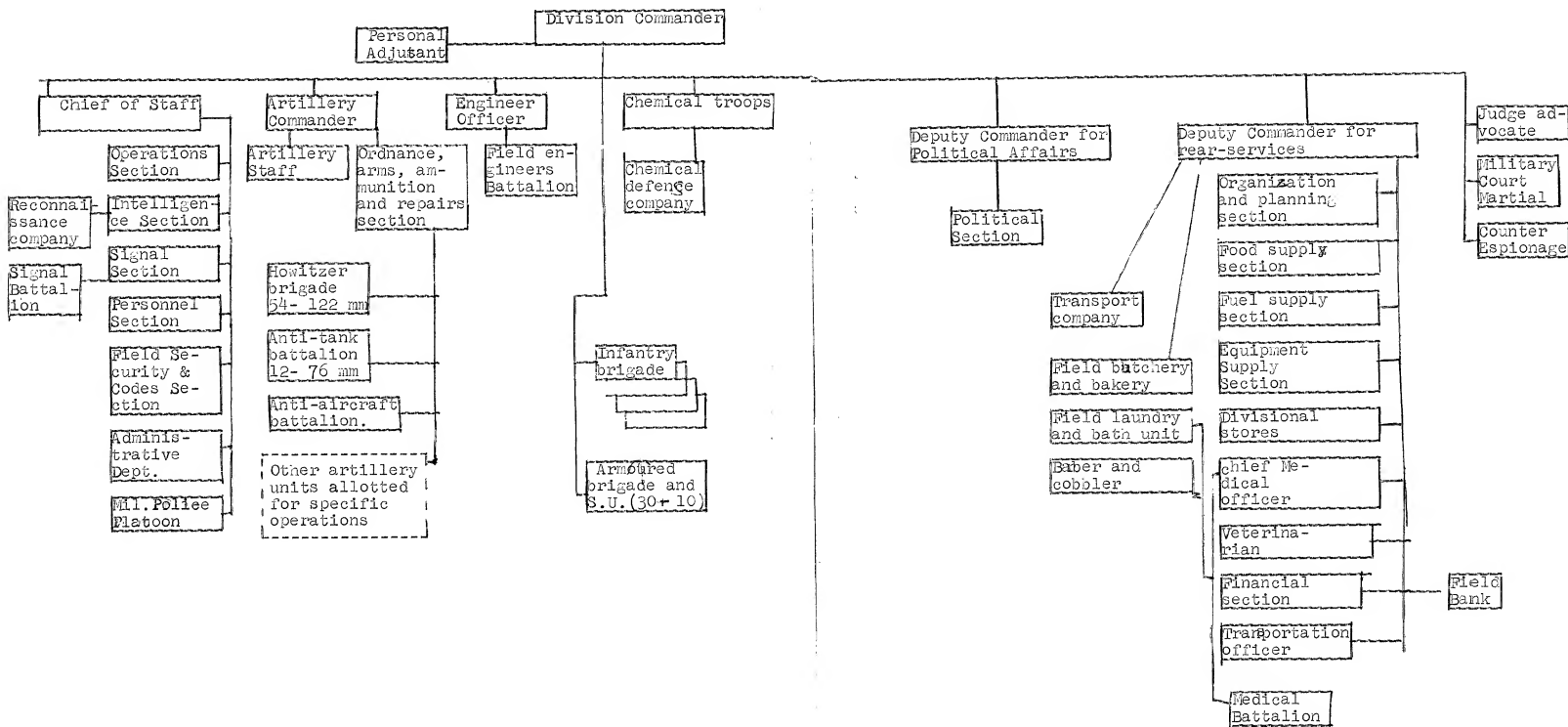
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DIAGRAM 'N'

Principal Elements of the Infantry Division



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DIAGRAM 'P'

Principal Elements of the Infantry Brigade

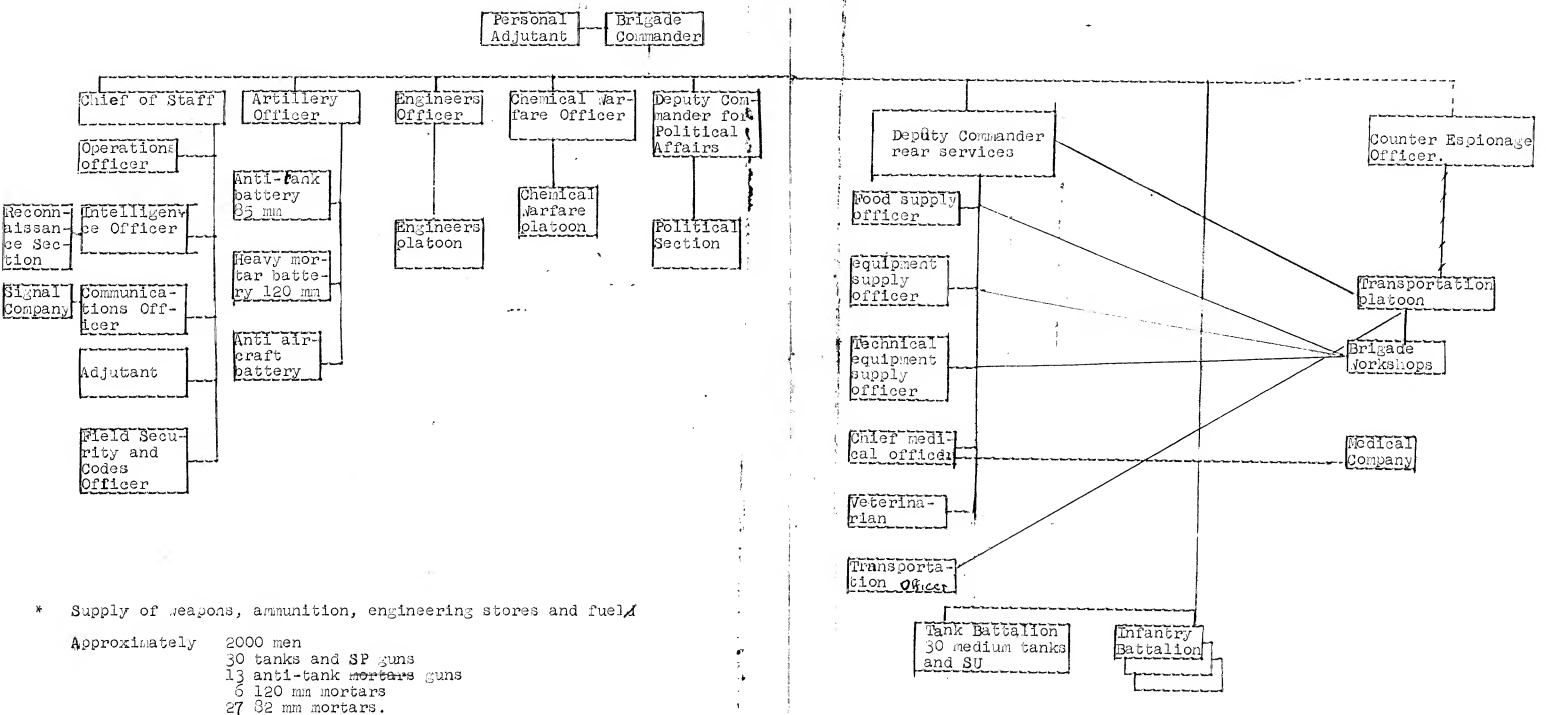
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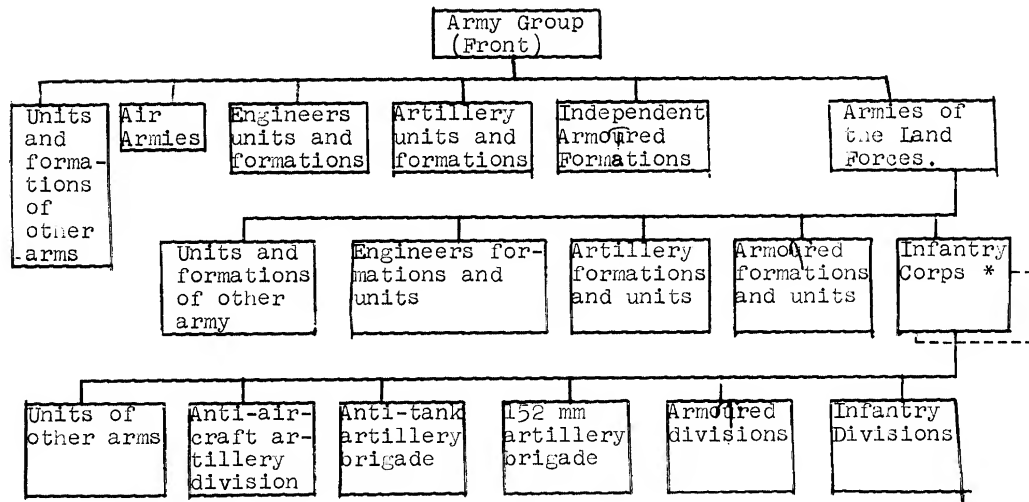


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DIAGRAM "M"

Principal Elements of the Army Group,  
Army and Infantry Corps.



\* There are 40 rear services within the corps.

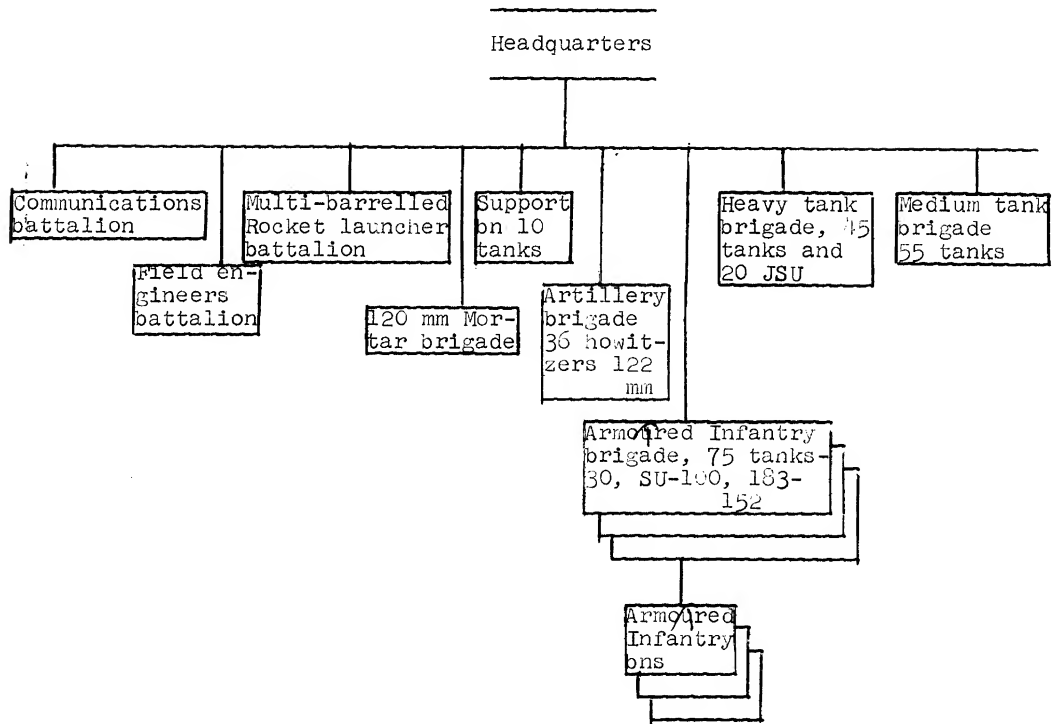
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DIAGRAM "O"

Principal Elements of the  
Armored Division.

(combat units only)



Total: 15,000 men, 235 tanks and SP guns.

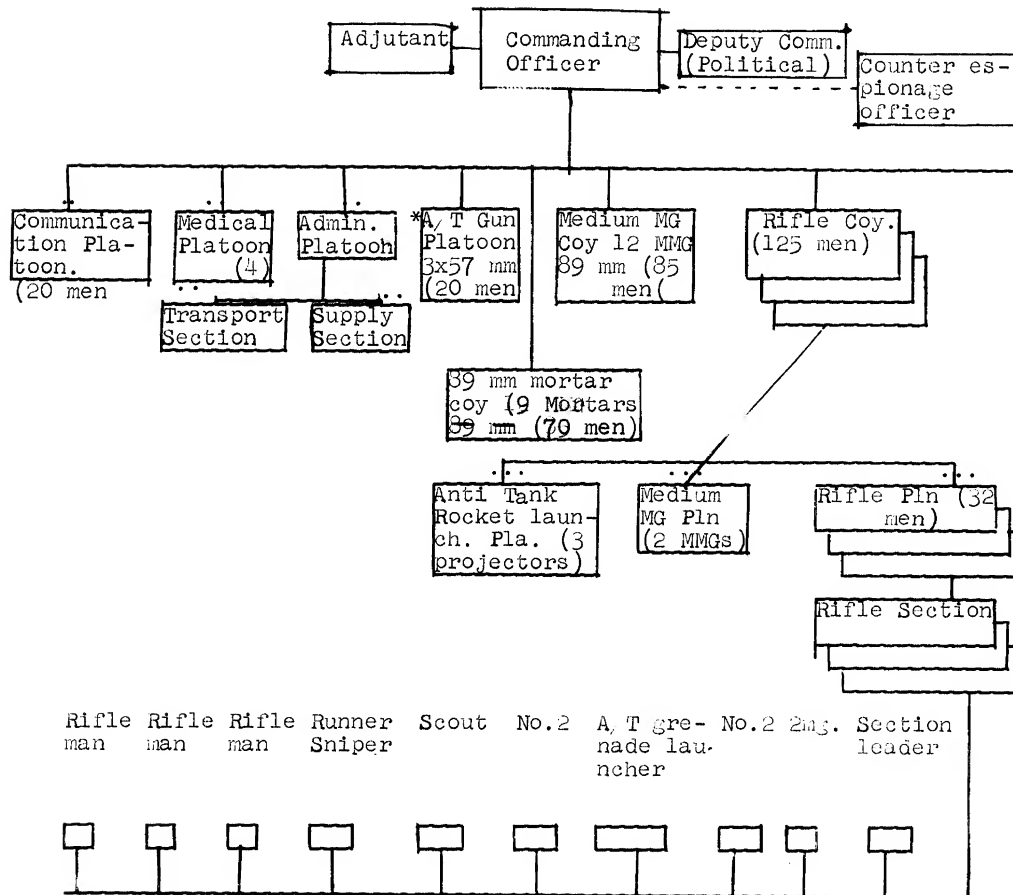
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DIAGRAM "Q"

Principal Elements of the  
Infantry Battalion

(Approx. 600 men)



\* Likely to be replaced by recoilless rifles.

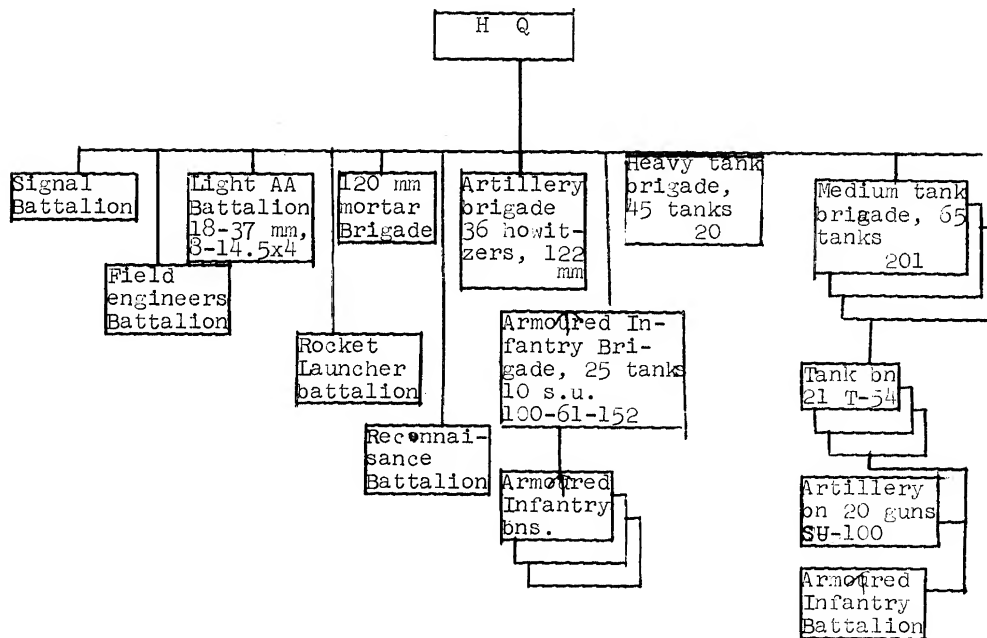
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DIAGRAM "S"

Principal Elements

of the Tank Division Combat Units Only (excluding supply services).



Total: 12,500 men, 235 tanks and SP guns.